required information has been called for and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Setting up of more postal division in Orissa

15. SHRI BHAGABAN MAJHI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be plaased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to set up some new postal divisions in Orissa;

(b) if so, the number of postal divisions set up in Orissa at present; and

(c) the new postal divisions proposed to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) No, Sir.

(b) At present eighteen Postal Divisions are functioning in Orissa.

(c) The question does not arise.

Linking of Cuttack and Bhubanaeshwar to local calls

16. SHRI BHAGABAN MAJHI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to replace the STD call system prevailing at present between Cuttack and Bhubaneshwar city in Orissa with local call system;

(b) whether the proposal given by the State Government in this regard has been pending since long; and

(c) if so, the steps taken to implement that proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): No, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise in view of (a) and (b) above.

Reducing money order charges

17. SHRI YEERA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to reduce Money Order charges for amounts less than Rs. 1,500/-

(b) if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is a fact that charges for Money Orders have gone up steeply in the last few years; and

(d) if so, the steps proposed to reduce such charges?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Money Order Service is already being provided at subsidised rates. No further reduction of the money order charges is justified.

(c) The present rate of Money Order charges are effective from 11th June, 1990 and there has been no revision thereafter.

(d) Does not arise.

Delivery of Monty Orders

18. SHRI YEERA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the postal services have updated present system to ensure accurate and speedy delivery of money orders;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether this system is operational in Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM) (a) and (b) In order to provide speedy and more effective money order service, the Department

of Post has taken up of project of transmitting money order through satellite channel. The pilot project for this purpose involved setting up VSAT (Very Small Aperture Terminal) along with other computer peripherals in six locations namely; Delhi Patna, Lucknow, Madras, Bangalore and Shimla. With the successful implementation of pilot project, the network of VSAT stations is now being expanded with about 20 more VSAT stations during the current year. A total of 75 VSAT stations will be set up in the country by the end of 8th plan period. Each VSAT station will provide the benefit of speedy transmission and delivery of money order through usual systems for post offices located within a radius of about 100 Km. around it.

(c) This system is not yet operational in Andhra Pradesh.

Privatisation of sale of postal articles

19. SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to privatise sale of postal articles in rural areas;

(b) if so the details of the proposal; and

(c) what concrete steps have been taken to involve unemployed youth in rural areas to sell and participate in sales of postal articles?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) to (c) It is proposed to introduce a scheme under which basic postal facilities (including sale of Postages stamps and postal stationery) shall be provided in rural areas through the village Panchayats under the supervision of M.P.

Deterioration in Speed Post Services in Andhra Pradesh

20. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to improve the Speed Post Services;

(b) whether it is a fact that Speed Post Service has deteriorated in Andhra Pradesh; and

(c) what steps are proposed to improve Speed Post Service in Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Yes, Sir. Improvement of Speed Post Services is an ongoing process.

(b) No, Sir. There has been an increase of 25 per cent in the traffic of Speed Post in 1994 in Andhra Pradesh.

(c) Further improvement in Speed Post Service includes gradual expansion of network and computerisation of operations.

Postal services in Andhra Pradesh

21. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are increasing postal strvices in rural areas of Andhra Pradesh;

(b) whether it is a fact that there is a proposal to appoint more Branch Post Masters; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) to (c) There is a target of opening of two extra departmental branch post offices in rural areas of Andhra Pradesh during the current year 1994-95. Additional hands to the extent justified are sanctioned in such cases.

Post Office Monthly Schemes for unemployed youths

22. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state: